

Message Text

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MEXICO CITY FOR RFA

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: EFIS, EINV, MOS
SUBJ: QUAKER OATS INTEREST IN MOROCCAN FISHERIES

1. REGIONAL FISHERIES ATTACHE (RFA) MET WITH JOSE ANTONIO DOS REIS RAMOS, INDUSTRIAL DIRECTOR, CONSERVAS COQUEIRO S.A., RUA SAO JORGE, 95/195, SAO GONCALO-RJ. BRAZIL. RAMOS' CANNERY IS ONE OF LARGEST IN BRAZIL AND IS PART OF QUAKER OATS OPERATION IN LATIN AMERICA. RAMOS' U.S. CONTACT: WILLIAM JORGENSEN, DIRECTOR OF SOUTH AND CENTRAL AMERICA, QUAKER OATS CO., MERCHANDISE MART PLAZA, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60654.

2. RFA ARRANGED MEETING WITH KAMIL BENJELLOUN, PRESIDENT OF COOPERATIVE MAROCAINE DE LA CONSERVE, WHO OPERATES 3 SARDINE CANNING PLANTS IN SAFI AND 1 PLANT IN ESSAOUIRA; ANNUAL OUTPUT IS BETWEEN 500-600,000 CASES OR ABOUT 20 PERCENT OF MOROCCO'S TOTAL EXPORTS. BENJELLOUN ARRANGED VISIT FOR RFA AND RAMOS TO INSPECT HIS 4 PLANTS AND TO VISIT PORT OF AGADIR.

3. FOLLOWING 2-DAY TRIP RAMOS INDICATED HE WOULD RECOMMEND ESTABLISHMENT OF JOINT VENTURE FOR MOROCCO. RAMOS' THINKING RUNS AS FOLLOWS: MOROCCO HAS A TREMENDOUS SARDINE RESOURCE, BUT BECAUSE OF

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LISHMENT OF JOINT VENTURE FOR MOROCCO. RAMOS' THINKING RUNS AS FOLLOWS: MOROCCO HAS A TREMENDOUS SARDINE RESOURCE, BUT BECAUSE OF

LACK OF TECHNICAL KNOW-HOW AND EQUIPMENT, PLUS ANTIQUATED ATTITUDES AND FACILITIES, THERE IS AN ENORMOUS WASTAGE OF FOOD FISH (NOTE: OVER 50 PERCENT OF SARDINE CATCH IS USED FOR REDUCTION INTO FISHMEAL).

4. RAMOS' THINKING FOLLOWS BENEJELLOUN'S THOUGHTS. BENEJELLOUN HAS TOLD RFA THAT (1) HE MUST EXPAND HIS OPERATIONS. HE CAN (2) EITHER ENLARGE HIS EXISTING FACILITIES, WHICH WILL ONLY MEET HIS SHORT-TERM NEEDS, OR (3) ESTABLISH A NEW, ULTRA-MODERN, FISHING COMPLEX WHICH COULD INCLUDE NEW VESSELS, PRIVATE FISH PIER, MACHINES TO PROCESS CANNED SARDINES--INCLUDING PET FOOD, FISHMEAL AND OIL FACILITIES, AND/OR FACILITIES FOR PRODUCING FROZEN FISH, CEPHALOPODES, AND CRUSTACEANS. (4) THIS COMPLEX SHOULD BE BUILT AT OR TO THE SOUTH OF AGADIR, MOROCCO'S MOST IMPORTANT FISHING PORT. (5) IF THE TOTAL PACKAGE EXCEEDS \$8 MILLION, HE WOULD RECEIVE CONSIDERABLE GOM SUPPORT, ESPECIALLY IF PROJECT LOCATED IN EX-SPANISH SAHARA.

5. RFA HAD PREVIOUSLY INTRODUCED JOHN B. HARRIS OF NEW ENGLAND FISH COMPANY (NEFCO) TO BENEJELLOUN. RFA AND BENEJELLOUN FEEL COMBINATION OF QUAKER OATS AND NEW ENGLAND WOULD HELP MEET BENEJELLOUN'S NEEDS SINCE QUAKER OATS INTERESTED IN SARDINE-PETFOOD OPERATIONS (NEFCO INTERESTED ONLY IN SELLING CANNED PRODUCT IN NORTH AMERICA) WHEREAS NEFCO INTERESTED IN FROZEN SEAFOOD TRADE, PLUS LATTER HAS VESSELS AND EXPERIENCE IN DEEPWATER TRAWLING, WHICH WOULD BE REQUIRED TO DEVELOP OFFSHORE, DEEPWATER SHRIMP/LOBSTER RESOURCE (QUAKER OATS DOES NOT HAVE THIS INTEREST OR CAPABILITY) ADDITIONALLY, BENEJELLOUN HAS ESTABLISHED JOINT VENTURE WITH ROK FISHERY INTERESTS INTERESTED IN CEPHALOPODES, WHICH ABOUND IN EX-SPANISH SAHARA AND MAURITANIAN WATERS.

6. CONGEN, ECON/COMM OFFICER, AND RFA BELIEVE BENEJELLOUN FAMILY AND CONNECTIONS TO BE AMONG MOROCCO'S MOST INFLUENTIAL WITH SUBSTANTIAL BUSINESS TIES. RFA IMPRESSED BY BENEJELLOUN'S OPERATIONS TO DATE AND HIS WILLINGNESS TO MODERNIZE OPERATIONS. BELIEVE PROPOSED QUAD-PARTITE JOINT VENTURE (USA, BRAZIL, SOUTH KOREA AND MOROCCO) STANDS EXCELLENT CHANCE FOR INITIATING SUCCESSFUL OPERATIONS IN MOROCCO WHICH COULD LEAD TO SUBSTANTIAL UPGRADING OF MOROCCO'S SEAFOOD INDUSTRY.

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7. BELIEVE OPIC MAY WISH TO DISCUSS PROJECT WITH BENEJELLOUN AND HAVE SCHEDULED MEETING WITH OPIC REPRESENTATIVE FOR JULY 23RD. SINCE PROJECT MAY INVOLVE OVER \$10 MILLION BELIEVE OPIC WOULD BE INTERESTED IN PROPOSAL, ESPECIALLY IF DEAL INVOLVES BOTH NEFCO AND QUAKER OATS. NOTE: NEFCO HAS NOT BEEN INFORMED OF PROJECT IN THIS FORM SINCE INITIAL NEFCO-BENEJELLOUN MEETING WERE HELD TO DETERMINE NEFCO'S INTEREST IN SALES OF CANNED SARDINES IN NORTH AMERICA. TO DATE, NEFCO HAS NOT REPLIED TO BENEJELLOUN OR RFA REGARDING THEIR INTEREST OR EVEN ACKNOW-

LEDGED RECEIPT OF SAMPLE SHIPMENT OF SARDINES AIRSHIPPED BY BENJELLOUN, RFA BELIEVES NEFCO'S HABIT OF TARDY REPLIES MAY REBOUND AGAINST THEM IN THIS INSTANCE AND BELIEVE NMFS-NOAA/DOC MAY WISH TO INFORM NEFCO THAT BENJELLOUN IS GROWING IMPATIENT.

8. RFA FINAL VERSION OF 200 PAGE REPORT, ON MOROCCAN FISHERIES, BEING TYPED, WHICH SHOULD SERVE AS BASIS FOR OPIC/NEFCO/QUAKER OATS PLANNING. REPORT WILL CONFIRM AVAILABILITY OF SARDINE RESOURCE, PLUS WASTAGE OF FOODFISH AND PROFITS OF EXISTING INDUSTRY. NEED FOR NEW APPROACH IN SEAFOOD INDUSTRY, RFA BELIEVES, WILL BE APPARENT.

9. ACTION REQUESTED: DETERMINE NEFCO INTEREST IN MARKETING BENJELLOUN'S CANNED SARDINES IN NORTH AMERICA AND PRESS FOR AN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF SAMPLE SHIPMENT. IF NO FURTHER INTEREST, PLEASE REPORT. SIMILARLY, IF NEFCO NEEDS ADDITIONAL TIME, A BRIEF NOTE TO BENJELLOUN WOULD SUFFICE. IF NEFCO HIGHLY INTERESTED, IT WOULD BE SUITABLE FOR THEM TO COMMUNICATE THIS INTEREST TO BENJELLOUN. IF NEFCO IS INTERESTED AND ACTUALLY PLANS TO MARKET CANNED SARDINES, THEN NEFCO COULD BE INFORMED OF RECENT DEVELOPMENTS, WITHOUT IDENTIFYING QUAKER OATS AS POTENTIAL PARTNER IN PROSPECT.

10. CONTACT QUAKER OATS AND INDICATE SIMPLY THAT RFA AND RAMOS VISITED 4 MAJOR FISHING PORTS IN MOROCCO AND BELIEVE INVESTMENT POTENTIAL GOOD. RAMOS WILL REPORT FACTS AT END OF MONTH. IF QUAKER OATS INTERESTED THEY MAY WISH TO MEET OR TALK BRIEFLY AND WITHOUT COMMITMENT, WITH OPIC REP, BONNIE HENDERSON, WHO IS DUE IN MOROCCO JULY 22-23. BRUBECK

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